

Report To:	STANDARDS AND PERSONNEL APPEALS COMMITTEE
Date:	29 JUNE 2022
Heading:	MEMBER DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING
Executive Lead Member:	NOT APPLICABLE
Ward/s:	NOT APPLICABLE
Key Decision:	NO
Subject to Call-In:	NO

Purpose of Report

The refreshed Member Development Strategy was approved at a meeting of the standards and Personnel Committee on the 8 December 2021 and subsequently recommended and approved by Cabinet.

This report sets out the mandatory training Members are required to undertake and further details on development training which may be useful for Members in the coming 12 months and following the next District Elections in May 2023.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to;

- Review and Consider the Mandatory training as detailed in table 1.1 within this report
- Consider appropriate development training for both current and future Members

Reasons for Recommendation(s)

Member training and development is an integral part of ensuring that the strategic aims and objectives of the Council are met in carrying out their duties of making local decisions and delivering better outcomes for the district.

Alternative Options Considered

Alternative Member development methods were considered as part of the review of the Member Development Strategy throughout 2021. two informal meetings.

Detailed Information

Ashfield District Council recognises that continuous member development is key to Councillors carrying out their role both within the district and as community representatives at meetings of the Council and its partners. All Councillors have a responsibility to learn new skills in line with the ongoing changes in local government.

The overarching aim of the Member Development Strategy is to ensure that there is support for all members to enable them to acquire sufficient knowledge and a full range of skills to maximise their ability and capacity. All members need to understand the scope and scale of the role in order to be able to identify the personal development needs that will enable them to fulfil the ever increasing individual and political demands.

In considering training and development, there are 3 main aspects to consider;

Induction Programme

Prior to the election of councillors (District Elections in 2023), The Standards and Personnel Appeals Committee will review a draft induction programme for all members to participate in following the election.

Mandatory Training

Mandatory Training covers all essential training required to carry out the role of District Councillor. Some of this training includes Committee specific training, without which Members will not be able to participate in some meetings of the Council.

Table A below provides an overview of all mandatory training for Members, as detailed in the Council's Constitution.

Table A – Mandatory Training

Training	Scope	Frequency
Planning Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Planning legislation and case law• Local Plan policies• Procedures• Role on Planning Committee• Role of a Member of Local Planning Authority• Planning Code of Good Practice• Relationship to Members' Code of Conduct• Development proposals and Interests under Members' Code of Conduct	Prior to sitting on Planning Committee minimum of every two years. Refresher training may be given more frequently.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fettering Discretion in the Planning Process • Lobbying of and by Councillors • Contact with applicants, developers and objectors • Role of Officers • Decision Making • Public Speaking at Meetings • Site Visits • How to determine Planning Applications 	
Licensing Committee and its Sub Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Licensing legislation, policies and procedures relevant to the remit of the Committee and its Sub-Committees • General Principles of each Act • Role of Members • Ward Member Role • Licensing Objectives • Determining Licensing Applications 	Prior to sitting on the Committee or its Sub Committees minimum of every four years.
Chief Officers Employment Committee and the Interview and Appraisal Sub Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment and selection • Appraisals • Legislation, policies and practice within the remit of the Committee and its Sub-Committee 	Prior to sitting on the Committee or its Sub Committee occasional refresher training may be given.
Standards and Personnel Appeals and its Sub Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislation, case law, policies and procedures relevant to the remit of the Committee and its Sub-Committees 	Prior to sitting on the Committee or its Sub Committees minimum of every four years.
Code of Conduct / Ethical Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of the Members' Code of Conduct and the governance of the Council. • Responsibilities and role as a Councillor. • Outline of Constitution • Promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by • Members Code of Conduct (including Gifts and Hospitality) • The Register of Interests • Protocols • Guidance • Dispensations • Political Publicity – rules • Data Protection • Freedom of Information 	At the point of election and on subsequent re-election(s)
Equalities and Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To tackle discrimination and social exclusion • promote equality of opportunity • foster good relations between all 	After each election.
Safeguarding	To provide guidance and advice to elected Members on;	Every 2 years.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults and • How Members should raise any concerns and receive assurance about children and adults who may be at risk. 	
Lone Worker	Ensuring Members keep themselves safe	After election or re-election. Refresher (online) annually.
Fraud Awareness	To raise awareness of where fraud may occur in District Councils and what actions should be taken.	After each election and bi-annually thereafter.
Chairperson (if appointed as a Chair)	To ensure that Members appointed to Chairmanships have the required knowledge, skills and attributes needed to become an effective Chairman.	Following initial appointment to position and subject to previous training or experience.

Member Development / Ongoing Training

The process for identifying Members' ongoing development needs and priorities is Member-led with officers bringing to Members' attention any training which is beneficial in carrying out their role. Learning and development priorities will also be assessed collectively in relation to the needs of specific committees and legislative and regulatory requirements as detailed above under Mandatory Training.

The Member Development Strategy includes a Training Needs Questionnaire to identify what priorities Members have for learning and development in the year ahead. This will then be used to develop and deliver the Member Development Training Plan. In identifying their priority learning and development needs, Members will be asked to consider outcomes they would like to achieve in relation to the requirements of the Council and achieving the Corporate Plan, personal aspirations and developing core skills.

Training will be delivered in a variety of forms, including in-house Member Seminars, briefings training at Committee / Panel meetings, E Learning, PowerPoint presentations and by sharing experiences with each other.

Bespoke training will be provided by a mixture of internal Officers and external providers as and when necessary. Additionally, Members can identify themselves external training that may enhance their knowledge and improve their skills in carrying out their role. In these instances Members should notify the Democracy Manager of the training, including the details of the nature of the course, location and cost.

Appendix A is the Training Needs Questionnaire.

Implications

Corporate Plan:

The Council will strive to ensure effective community leadership through training, good governance, transparency and accountability

Legal:

There are no legal implications contained within this report.

Finance:

Budget Area	Implication
General Fund – Revenue Budget	The cost of training and future Member development is to be met from the existing Training & Development budget for Members.
General Fund – Capital Programme	
Housing Revenue Account – Revenue Budget	
Housing Revenue Account – Capital Programme	

Risk:

Risk	Mitigation
Insufficient Member training and development carries risks regarding decision making, debate and representation.	An effective Member Development Strategy will ensure Members have the necessary skills to carry out their role both within the district and representing their constituents at Council and other partner meetings.

Human Resources:

In recognition of the varying development needs and preferred learning styles, the Member Development Strategy facilitates a range of delivery methods including workshops, presentations, written resources, and e-learning. Ongoing work will be undertaken with Human Resources regarding the effective implementation of the Strategy and future Member Training Plans to ensure that it meets the needs of all Members in carrying out their role.

Environmental/Sustainability

Environmental / Sustainability considerations will be considered on a case by case basis with regards to methods of training.

Equalities:

Member learning and development activities are open and accessible to all Councillors. It is intended that all development activities should be equally accessible and meet the Council's equal opportunities policy and practice.

Other Implications:

None

Reason(s) for Urgency

None

Reason(s) for Exemption

None

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